



# MEDIA RELEASE

City of Medicine Hat - 500 First Street S.E. - Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A 8E9 - (403) 502-8071

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2007**

## **THREE ALARM FIRE DAMAGES DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES** *Temporarily closes streets*

**Medicine Hat** – The City of Medicine Hat Fire Service responded to a three alarm fire in the city's downtown today.

The fire, which was reported at approximately 2:16 a.m., started in a building in the 600 block of Third Street SE that houses a bookstore and restaurant. The fire spread to the Walton Block located on South Railway Avenue.

A total of 42 firefighters from all three fire stations battled the blaze for more than eight hours to control the fire, which was in the City's historical downtown area and destroyed two buildings comprised of several businesses. Two buildings on either side of the Walton Block on South Railway sustained smoke and water damage.

There are no reported injuries.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. Investigators from the Medicine Hat Fire Service will be sifting through the debris over the next several days. A structural assessment will be undertaken by the City's Planning, Building and Development department.

A preliminary damage estimate is \$5 million for buildings and contents.

Third Street is closed from Sixth Avenue to South Railway Avenue. The parking lane on the west side of South Railway Avenue is closed. The west side of South Railway from Third to Fourth Street is closed to pedestrians.

This is the third major fire in the city's downtown this summer. A fire occurred in the Central Block building on Second Street on July 15. A second fire in the building on Aug. 26 caused permanent structural damage. Demolition of the building is underway. Second Street continues to be restricted to single lane, one-way traffic during the demolition.

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